

I. NUTRITION EDUCATION

Overview

Introduction

Legislation mandates that nutrition education be made available, at no cost, to all participants in the WIC Program. Nutrition education is vital if the WIC Program is to result in long term improvements in the health status of its participants. Targeting nutrition counseling at specific nutrition risk factors can help improve nutritional status. The immediate effects include ensuring that WIC foods are properly used and that family members for whom it was intended eat the foods. Once individuals no longer participate in the WIC Program, the nutrition education they have received will encourage the continued selection and consumption of nutritious foods necessary for good health.

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I.1. Program Goals

Program goals The nutrition education component of the WIC Program is based on the following goals:

- Emphasizing the relationship of sound nutrition to the total concept of good health.
 - Special emphasis on the nutritional needs of pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants, and children under the age of 5.
 - Assisting participants in making positive changes in food habits to improve nutritional status and prevent nutrition related problems through the use of supplemental and other nutritious foods.
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I.2. Nutrition Education Policy

Nutrition education policy

- Emphasize participation in nutrition education and its long term health benefits at each certification.
- Teach the relationship between diet and good health, including the benefits of eating from a variety of foods in addition to those provided by WIC.
- Provide and document nutrition education or follow-up every two months or monthly, depending on scheduling needs. All participants must be provided with at least two nutrition education contacts during their certification period. (For infants certified for >6 months, nutrition education must be provided at least quarterly.) The first contact is usually individual nutrition education given during the certification process. The subsequent nutrition education contacts include either individual or group nutrition education, depending on participant's needs and risk status.
- Nutrition education contacts must be scheduled and documented in screen 107 of the computer (see "Core Contact and General Education" of this section for further information).
- The CPA and participant develop a plan based on participant's category, level of nutrition risk (low or high,) nutrition education needs and goals. Classes must be assigned by the CPA.
- Nutrition education content considers the participant's nutritional needs/interests, household situation, religious and cultural values, language spoken and literacy level.
- Provide nutrition education that is appropriate to the individual's specific status and nutrition risk factors. See Section D for complete listing of nutrition risk factors. If more than one member of the family is enrolled in WIC, prioritize in the following order:
 - pregnant woman
 - breastfeeding woman
 - infant
 - child
 - postpartum woman

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I.2. Nutrition Education Policy, Continued

Nutrition education policy (continued)

- Nutrition education must include verbal communication between WIC staff and participants (i.e. discussion, summaries, questions and answers, etc.).
- All high risk participants must have a High Risk Care Plan documented in the participant's chart at the time of certification by a CPA or Registered Dietitian.
- Videos may be used in conjunction with a class, but may not substitute as a class.
- An example of the standard state class outline format can be found in the Forms Section.
- Education requirements for reluctant attendees may be met by:
 - reassessing the scheduled education, i.e. - does it meet the participant's need?
 - rescheduling to meet the participant's needs;
 - individualizing nutrition contacts, or by;
 - issue one month's vouchers, scheduling the following month for nutrition education.
- Participants may not be denied supplemental foods for failure to attend or participate in nutrition education activities.

FI pickup policy

A Food Instrument (FI) pickup is an appointment used to issue vouchers only. It cannot be used in place of nutrition education contacts; it can be used in between routine nutrition education contacts. A FI pickup can be scheduled when:

- a nutrition education contact has been documented in the same month
- vouchers are reported lost and need replaced
- a change in the food package prescription is necessary

A FI pickup cannot be scheduled in lieu of a class, a high risk contact or due to a missed appointment. The participant should be scheduled for an alternate class or an individual contact with a CPA.

I.3. Core Contact and General Education

Core contact

Core contact information must be presented verbally to all WIC participants and endorsers at the initial certification. Core contact includes an explanation of:

- WIC as a supplemental food program
- the nutritional value of the supplemental foods
- the importance of health care
- importance of supplemental foods being consumed by the participant

Explanation of current nutrition risk factors must be provided at every certification.

The core contact information may be covered:

- exclusively in the certification, or;
- incorporated in individual contacts, or;
- incorporated into an orientation class.

General education

Appropriate general education items relevant to the nutrition risk factors assigned must be presented to all WIC participants at each certification visit. General education includes:

- Women:
 - explanation of BMI
 - weight gain/loss recommendations
 - explanation of hematocrit or hemoglobin level
 - dietary recommendations appropriate for NRF
 - recommendation or reinforcement of prenatal vitamin intake
 - recommendation of 400 mcg folic acid supplement daily
 - recommendation to avoid alcohol, tobacco or drugs
 - encourage breastfeeding
 - anticipatory guidance for breastfeeding/problems solving/intervention
 - encourage appropriate physical activity
 - schedule appropriate nutrition education at each visit
- Infants and Children:
 - explanation of growth pattern
 - explanation of hematocrit or hemoglobin level (if > 7 months of age)
 - dietary recommendations appropriate for category and NRF
 - information on dental health and fluoride
 - encourage appropriate physical activity and play
 - schedule appropriate nutrition education at each visit

I.4. Documentation of Nutrition Education

Computer documentation

- Document each group's nutrition education schedule in the computer under the group head's name.
- Enter the following information into the computer scheduling system:
 - Date and time of nutrition education
 - Type of contact - individual or group
 - Class topic code (see Forms section of this manual)
 - Attendance status
 - "A" - attended
 - "N" - not attended
 - "R" - refused
 - "S" - rescheduled; credit not given for education attendance
 - "F" - FIs issued, no class; credit not given for education attendance
 - "O" - recertification letter; gives credit for education attendance
 - "T" - letter of ineligibility; gives credit for education attendance
- When using class code "H01," document the information covered in the participant's chart.
- If the participant refuses to attend or does not attend, documentation should indicate attempts to reschedule for another class or schedule individualized counseling.
- Non-English classes can be scheduled into the computer system using STAFF INITIALS option, using SPAN for Spanish, VIET for Vietnamese, etc.

Chart documentation

- If not documented in the computer, the following information must be documented in the chart when a participant receives individualized counseling:
 - The CPA/CA providing the education;
 - what nutrition information was discussed, and;
 - other appropriate data such as the results of nutritional, anthropometric, cultural, and socioeconomical assessment.
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I.5. Teaching Nutrition Education

Who may teach?

Qualified CPAs, CAs, and Peer Counselors may teach nutrition education under the following guidelines.

CPAs may teach when...

The Nutrition Preceptor, the local clinic Registered Dietitian or a State Agency Registered Dietitian evaluates them once a year.

- Documentation of this evaluation is completed on the “Teacher Evaluation” form and must be kept on file. See the Forms Section for an example of the Teacher Evaluation form.
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CAs may teach when...

- They have completed all appropriate modules:
 - Biochemical;
 - Anthropometric;
 - Dietary Assessment;
 - Basic Nutrition;
 - Providing Nutrition Education, and;
 - Breastfeeding.
 - Training for a new class has been completed by the RD. The classes for which the CA is approved are documented in the employee file.
 - They have been observed and evaluated by an RD the first time each new class is taught, with documentation completed on the “Teacher’s Evaluation” form, which is kept on file.
 - The Nutrition Preceptor, the local clinic Registered Dietitian or a State Agency Registered Dietitian evaluates them at least once each year.
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I.5. Teaching Nutrition Education, Continued

**Peer
Counselors
may teach
when...**

- They have been observed and evaluated by the Breastfeeding Coordinator the first time each new class is taught, with documentation completed on the “Teacher’s Evaluation” form, which is kept in the employee’s file.
- The classes that the Peer Counselor is approved to teach are documented in the employee file.

They have completed the following modules and satisfactorily passed (80%) each accompanying exam:

- Breastfeeding;
- Providing Nutrition Education

Peer Counselors may teach the State-approved classes on breastfeeding promotion, support, or techniques. A Peer Counselor must meet the qualifications of Clinical Assistant in order to teach any other classes. Any exceptions must be approved by the State Breastfeeding Coordinator.

I.6. High Risk Contacts

High risk contacts

A high risk participant is defined as a participant who:

- has been assigned any risk factor designated as “high risk”

Each high risk participant must have:

- a High Risk Care Plan (HRCP) documented in the participant’s chart at the time of certification by a CPA or RD
- an individualized assessment with a Registered Dietitian (RD must complete A/P note).
- The RD must be responsible for documenting the overall management and coordination of care plans for high risk participants.

For infants certified for >6 months, see Section C for guidelines on high risk contacts relating to midcert assessment.

Each agency must have a consistent method (i.e. progress notes, high risk form, screen 108, etc.) for documenting high risk care plans.

Components of the High Risk Care Plan

All care plans must include the “Assessment” and the “Plan” components of the SOAP format. The SOAP format is defined as follows:

- Subjective data is the information the participant reports. It includes the perception of risk, reported information on the medical/diet history, formula history and/or reported symptoms.
- Objective data includes laboratory data and other measurable data such as age, LMP, number of pregnancies, etc.
- Assessment is the CPAs evaluation of the participant’s nutrition risk. Assessment includes:
 - interpretation of the subjective and objective information
 - identification of the problem(s)
 - assignment of nutrition risk factor(s)
- Plan includes:
 - brief summary of the nutrition education provided/needed;
 - goals set to resolve the concern/risk;
 - any referrals made;
 - data that needs to be assessed at the second contact (i.e. ht., wt., hct., formula tolerance, follow through on referrals, etc.)

I.7. Local Agency Nutrition Preceptor

Local nutrition preceptor

The local agency Nutrition Preceptor must be a Registered Dietitian or a CPA1, preferably with a Bachelor's Degree in Nutrition and one year WIC teaching experience, designated by each agency, who will coordinate that agency's nutrition class outlines and review nutrition education materials.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the position include:

- Reviewing and approving nutrition education materials such as class outlines, videos, pamphlets and books, etc. for:
 - Current, accurate, and relevant nutritional content;
 - readability, literacy level and grammatical accuracy (See "Nutrition Education Materials" in this section for more details).
 - Assuring that all class outlines are complete (see "Nutrition Class Outlines" in this section for required elements). An example of the standard State class outline format can be found in the Forms section of this manual.
 - Submitting all locally-developed or modified nutrition classes and materials to the State Nutrition Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to scheduled teaching for review and comment.
 - Coordinating the nutrition education schedule with the Local Agency Administrator when writing the Nutrition Education Plan.
 - Reviewing the class evaluations for each clinic site to determine class effectiveness and/or need for modification.
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I.8. Nutrition Education Materials

Nutrition education materials

Education materials are available through the State office for all categories of participants. These include lesson plans, pamphlets, books and videos. The State office serves as a clearinghouse for nutrition education materials. All classes and materials developed or used locally should be submitted to the State office for reference (electronic submission preferred.) Current lesson plans are entered into an electronic database for dissemination to all Utah WIC clinics.

- Most pamphlets and an assortment of videos are available in Spanish and English.
- Most materials from the State office are produced at a low literacy level and are therefore appropriate for participants with limited reading skills.

Order forms may be obtained through the State office for audiovisuals, pamphlets, and professional books.

Nutrition education materials may also be obtained through the WIC Works resource system, FNIC and USDA (include in annual Nutrition Education Plan and/or submit to State office).

Evaluating nutrition education materials

All nutrition education materials used and/or developed for participant education must be evaluated according to criteria outlined in the "Guide for Evaluation of Nutrition Education Materials" handbook. These books are available at the State. (Exception: Nutrition education materials distributed by the State office do not need to be evaluated by local clinics.)

Evaluation results should be recorded on the Nutrition Education Materials Evaluation form. See the Form Section of this manual for an example of this form.

Completed forms and copies of the evaluated materials should be kept on file at the local WIC clinics. These will be evaluated during Management Evaluation visits.

I.9. Nutrition Class Outlines

Nutrition class outlines State nutrition class outlines are available for use and guidance.

The clinic's Nutrition Preceptor must approve all nutrition classes that are not from the State. WIC nutrition lesson plans available from USDA, FNS, and WIC-Works may be used after approval by the local Nutrition Preceptor. The Nutrition Preceptor must initial the lesson plan, indicate the date of approval and maintain a current file in the clinic.

When developing class outlines, the Nutrition Education Coordinator should:

- Assess the needs of the clinic population and pick topics that address these needs.
- Coordinate the nutrition education schedule and computer coding with the Administrator/Nutrition Education Plan.

Newly written classes must include the following elements (suggested outline format can be found in Forms Section of this manual):

- goals
- measurable objectives
- list of needed materials
- references
- content
- learning activities
- evaluation

The classes must be submitted to the State Nutrition Coordinator for review two weeks prior to the scheduled class. Electronic submission is preferred (e-mail or computer disc). Modifications by the State Nutrition Coordinator may be requested prior to teaching the class.

Approved class outlines will be coded and added to the State's Class Outline list. Additionally, a copy of the class will be filed at the State office and made available for statewide use.

I.10. Evaluating Nutrition Education Classes

Evaluating nutrition education classes

- All classes new to the WIC clinic must be formally evaluated one of the first times it is taught.
 - The purpose is to determine if the class is relevant and understandable by the WIC participants in that clinic site.
 - If the class is not appropriate for the WIC participants, the nutrition class preceptor should select another class and note this in the class file.
 - The evaluations must include:
 - “Class Evaluation Form” (see Forms Section) completed by the instructor
 - post tests or evaluations completed by participants
 - Class evaluations must be kept in the class file and will be reviewed at the management evaluation visit.
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Evaluating nutrition education teachers

- The supervising RD must evaluate all CPAs and CAs once a year.
 - CAs must be observed and evaluated by a RD the first time each new class is taught.
 - Peer Counselors must be observed and evaluated by the Breastfeeding Coordinator the first time each new class is taught.
 - Evaluations must be documented on the “Teacher’s Evaluation” form and kept in the employee’s file.
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